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SECURITY INFORMATION
CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
INFORMATION FROM
FOREIGN DOCUMENTS OR RADIO BROADCASTS

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CD NO.

COUNTRY USSR

SUBJECT Political; Sociological - Slave labor

DATE OF INFORMATION 1951

HOW PUBLISHED Daily newspaper

DATE DIST. 16 Jan 1952

WHERE PUBLISHED Cairo

NO. OF PAGES 3

DATE PUBLISHED 27, 28 Sep 1951

LANGUAGE Armenian

SUPPLEMENT TO REPORT NO.

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REPORT 125 SLAVE LABOR CAMPS IN USSR

Haigazn K. Khazarian

There are 125 exile and slave labor camps located in ten major regions in the USSR. The central headquarters of these camps is in Moscow. The ten regions are as follows [unless otherwise indicated all locations named are in the RSFSR]:

Region A. Northwest USSR, 20 camps: Arkhangel'sk and Kotlas [Arkhangel'sk Oblast], Kola [Murmansk Oblast], White Sea, Leningrad area, Karelia area [Karelo-Finnish SSR], Solovetskiye Islands.

Region B. Northeast USSR, 11 camps: Pechora, Komi, and Vorkuta [all in Komi ASSR], Novaya Zemlya and Vaygach [Arkhangel'sk Oblast].

Region C. Central European USSR, 6 camps: Volga, Yaroslavl, Orel.

Region D. South European USSR, 6 camps: Stalingrad, Starobel'sk [Voroshilovgrad Oblast], Nal'chik [Kabarda ASSR], Caucasus.

Region E. East European USSR, 6 camps: area north of Gor'kiy and Kuybyshev.

Region F. Ural area, 9 camps: Sverdlovsk, Kungur [Molotov Oblast], Prizheval'sk [Issyk-Kul' Oblast, Kirgiz SSR].

Region G. West Siberia, 9 camps: Omsk [Omsk Oblast], Tobol'sk, Novosibirsk, Tomsk, Barnaul.

Region H. Central Asia, 8 camps: in Kazakh SSR -- Petropavlovsk [North Kazakhstan Oblast], Karaganda [Karaganda Oblast], Leninogorsk [East Kazakhstan Oblast], Aktyubinsk [Aktyubinsk Oblast]; in Uzbek SSR -- Tashkent.

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Region I. North Central Siberia, 7 camps: Yenisey-Noril'sk area [Taymir National Okrug, Krasnoyarsk Kray], Igarka and Krasnoyarsk [Krasnoyarsk Kray].

Region J. Far Eastern Siberia, 43 camps: Baykal, Irkutsk, Lena region [all in Irkutsk Oblast], Yakutsk, Aldan [both in Yakut ASSR], Chita [Chita Oblast], Khabarovsk, Komsomol'sk [both in Khabarovsk Kray], Vladivostok [Primorskiy Kray], Kamchatka, Sakhalin, Bering Sea area. This is the worst region. The temperature goes down to 50 degrees below zero and the rivers are frozen through May and June. The Cheka [sic] puts the laborers to work in gold and iron mines under miserable conditions.

The slave laborers in many of these camps exceed 150,000. For example, there are 500,000 workers in the Karaganda camp in Kazakh SSR and 1,100,000 persons in each of the camps at Arkhangel'sk (Region A) and at Pechora (Region B).

In addition to the above-mentioned locations, each city has its own central slave labor camp.

Comparison of the 1926 and 1939 censuses of the USSR indicates a 558-percent increase in the population of the Murmansk and Arkhangel'sk areas, a 364-percent increase in Eastern Siberia, and a 329-percent increase in Far Eastern Siberia. This increase is due to the number of exiles and slave laborers sent there.

These camps are controlled by a central executive body which is called GULAG and is a branch of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of USSR and the Cheka. The chief of the GULAG is M. D. Berman; his assistant is Semen Firin.

These millions of people condemned to forced labor include Ukrainians, Germans, Poles, Georgians, Armenians, Tatars, Uzbeks, Kazakhs, Chinese, Koreans, Latvians, Lithuanians, and Finns.

More than 300,000 Armenians have been exiled to Siberia and to slave labor camps in other regions. This figure is three times as large as the number of repatriated Armenians. Some 2,025 Armenian priests have been murdered. The Armenian church has lost 1,200 buildings, 189,000 acres of land, and 40 million dollars in cash and other assets.

People condemned to forced labor are accused of being counterrevolutionaries or political criminals, spies, and of having kept in contact with the outside world. In the same camps there are ordinary criminals, who receive more consideration than the political prisoners. Inmates of camps are fed soup twice a day and receive 400 to 800 grams of bread. The camps are surrounded by barbed wire. Armed guard on towers are ready to shoot anyone trying to escape. These condemned people must work in mines, forests, and on railroads, under miserable conditions, until death.

In the USSR one of every six males is condemned to slave labor. Ten percent of the inmates of these camps are women. The figures for political prisoners sent to exile and slave labor camps are as follows:

<u>Year</u>	<u>No. of Persons</u>
1918 - 1923	No records available
1924	87,000
1925	148,000
1926	155,000

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<u>Year</u>	<u>No of Persons</u>
1927	298,000
1930	662,259 (during the days of Yagoda)
1932	2,000,000
1933	5,000,000
1940	8,000,000
1941	20,000,000
1942	24,000,000 to 30,000,000 (during Beriya days)
1947	16,000,000
1949	10,000,000
1950 }	
1951 }	15,000,000 to 20,000,000

In the USSR an ordinary worker earns 1,496 rubles annually. A slave laborer receives 500 rubles' worth of food. The Cheka makes 996 rubles' profit on each prisoner.

Individuals who have escaped from these slave camps are witnesses to the atrocities committed there. Some of these witnesses who have written about the camps are: Vladimir Chernavin, "I Speak for the Mute Prisoners"; George [Georgiy] Kichin, "Slaves of the OGPU"; Duchess Atol, "Forced Labor"; Ivan Soloneyvich, "Russia in Chains"; and D. J. Dallin and Boris Ye. Nikolayevskiy, "Forced Labor in Communist Russia".

Others who have written on this subject are: L. T. More, S. A. Maslakov, Ye. Shirvin, A. Silika, and G. S. Scott. French publications include works by Ye. Besanovyy and J. Tsapiskiy. There are some publications in German by A. Schwartsy, K. Aibrekhty, A. Rusinovyy, A. Dimitriyevnay, and J. Tempoly. No contradiction is found in the statements of any of these people.

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